

Consumer Reports **Health**
BEST BUY DRUGS

Free Guidance for Consumers on Prescription Medicines



NEWS UPDATE

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[Should Obama take a drug to lower his cholesterol? The answer may surprise you.](#)

President Obama's most recent physical exam revealed that he had elevated cholesterol levels. So we wondered: Does the president need to take a drug to lower his cholesterol?

Using a handy calculator to figure the president's risk of having a heart attack or death from a cardiac-related event in the next 10 years, we were able to determine the most important thing he should do. [See here to find out.](#)

[Should you still take Fosamax or Boniva to strengthen bones?](#)

Women who use popular osteoporosis drugs like [alendronate](#) (Fosamax and generic), [ibandronate](#) (Boniva), [risedronate](#) (Actonel), and [zoledronic acid](#) (Reclast), may be worried about whether they should continue taking these drugs. It was reported recently that the drugs could be associated with a risk of thigh bone (femur) fractures.

Fosamax's ability to reduce the risk of hip or spine fractures probably outweighs the associated risk of thigh-bone fractures. Still, there are reasons to approach this drug, and other bone-building drugs, with caution.

[If you have osteoporosis or osteopenia, should you take a drug to help you?](#)

[Muscle pain from taking a statin? Check your dose.](#)

If you take a statin to lower your cholesterol, you may have experienced muscle aches, soreness, tenderness or weakness. As many as 1 in 10 people who take a statin do.

But taking the maximum recommended dose of 80 mg of simvastatin (Zocor and generic) could cause muscle damage, according to a recent Food and Drug Administration warning. So we encourage you to check your statin dosage, and take seriously any muscle pain you may experience. As the statin dose increases, so does the risk of experiencing these side effects.

Zocor isn't the only statin that can cause muscle damage. All statins can, including atorvastatin (Lipitor), fluvastatin (Lescol, Lescol XL), lovastatin (Altoprev, Mevacor, and generic), pravastatin (Pravachol and generic), rosuvastatin (Crestor) or simvastatin/ezetimibe (Vytorin).

If you think your statin may be causing you muscle pain, [read on](#) to see what to do.